

**Utah's Division of Child and Family Services**

# **Eastern Region Report**

## **Qualitative Case Review Findings**

**Review Conducted**

**April 29 – May 2, 2013**

*A Report by*

*The Office of Services Review, Department of Human Services*

# **I. Introduction**

The Eastern Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR) for FY2013 was held the week of April 29-May 2, 2013. Reviewers were selected from the Office of Services Review, the Division of Child and Family Services, community partners and other interested parties. Two individuals from Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health participated in the review.

There were 20 cases randomly selected for the Eastern Region review. The case sample included 15 foster care cases and five in-home cases. Cases were selected from the Blanding, Castle Dale, Moab, Price, Roosevelt, Ute Family and Vernal offices. A certified lead reviewer and shadow reviewer were assigned to each case. Information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents or other guardians, foster parents, caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. Additionally, the child's file, including prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

Staff from the Office of Services Review met with region staff on August 1, 2013 in an exit conference to review the results of the region's QCR. Scores and data analysis were presented to the region.

## II. Stakeholder Observations

The results of the QCR should be considered within a broad context of local and regional interaction with community partners. Each year Office of Services Review staff members interview key community stakeholders such as foster parents, providers, representatives from the legal community, other community agencies, and DCFS staff. On April 29-30, 2013 members of the OSR staff interviewed individuals and groups of DCFS staff and community partners. DCFS staff who were interviewed included the Region Director, region administrators, trainers, supervisors, and caseworkers. Community partners interviewed included a guardian ad litem, assistant attorneys general, Vernal City Administrator, Price Quality Improvement Committee, and Northeastern Counseling Center. Strengths and opportunities for improvement were identified by the various groups of stakeholders as described below. Interviews were conducted in the Uintah Basin and Price.

### LEGAL PARTNERS

#### Strengths

DCFS can be very effective with families. For example, they can be very effective in addressing a family's substance abuse issue.

Everything DCFS does is designed around helping the child. If the public understood that, there would be more public support.

Workers get information to the attorneys on a timely basis and the workers are keeping the attorneys adequately informed. The workers are responsive to the attorneys' requests for information and supervision of visits.

The workers do a good job of meeting their clients' needs and they serve them well.

Parental defense is good. They know what is important to argue and what's not important. They're very rational and workers can talk to them directly.

The Basin will soon have a new judge and a new assistant attorney general.

The Children's Justice Center is great.

Judge Steel trusts Child and Family Teams to make the decisions on cases. He wants the parties to the case to get together and figure things out, and then he'll order what they've decided.

#### Improvement Opportunities

The facilitation and management of team meetings needs to be improved. Team meetings usually last too long and it takes too long to get to the purpose of the meeting. It would help if parents knew ahead of time what the purpose of the meeting was and workers stuck to that purpose.

The biggest issue is the lack of therapy and treatment programs. There have been lots of complaints about the local mental health provider due to staff turnover and the quality of work being produced. Also, it's hard to get good services for parents because of Medicaid.

The practice of mixed teams in the Price office has created confusion due to CPS workers having multiple supervisors. There was better follow through when they were under one supervisor.

Everything about the way drug testing used to be done was superior to the way it is currently being done. It's surprising there haven't been more adverse findings around reasonable efforts because it's so difficult for parents to drug test now.

There's lots of turnover of DCFS staff in the Uintah Basin. Lots of workers still need help because they're new and that is reflected in the quality of the court reports. The quality of casework is also negatively impacted by turnover. Experienced workers can react better without direction than new workers can.

It's too hard to get a referral accepted on a DVRCA case. Referents are expected to do too much investigation in order to get their referral accepted.

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

### **Strengths**

The domestic violence shelter in Vernal is great, the location is excellent, and the staff is wonderful to work with.

The Price QIC committee is working on identifying things that could improve employee retention. They're trying to identify what causes worker stress and then make some recommendations to region administration.

Utah Foster Care Foundation is trying some new things to raise public awareness. For example, they've placed some ads in movie theaters.

Carbon and Emery County foster parents now have access to a Resource Family Consultant who doesn't have a caseload, so all efforts can be focused on acting as a resource to foster families and caseworkers. This seems to be working well.

The region is working hard to get more kids into kinship placements.

There's always been a good relationship between Northeastern Counseling Center (NCC) and DCFS.

NCC feels DCFS progressively gets better to work with. NCC is attending more team meetings and they never miss 24-hour meetings.

### **Improvement Opportunities**

New workers need more mentoring, but most of the existing workers haven't been with DCFS long enough to be mentors to new workers. New workers have the opportunity to shadow and observe experienced workers, but they don't get coaching and training from them.

The QIC committee wants to be helpful, but they're not getting the results of CPR and QCR reviews to know how DCFS is doing. They've asked how they can help, but they've been told the region already has a plan. QIC isn't being asked to help craft recommendations for improvement, nor are they receiving updates on the implementation of previous recommendations. QIC is getting the impression that DCFS doesn't want or need their input.

There are fewer foster parents than there used to be, and foster parents' exit surveys are showing a noticeable decline in their satisfaction.

There is a need for shelter placement for teenagers since there is no longer a receiving center in the Price area.

Judges feel like children have to be ordered into foster care to keep them safe.

New workers need a better understanding of HIPPA laws. They request evaluations from the mental health provider that they're not allowed to have. NCC encourages parents to sign releases for DCFS.

It's difficult to find beds for youth who are in need of acute care.

Calls are getting lost at Centralized Intake and NCC is surprised at the referrals that aren't accepted.

### **REGION DIRECTOR, REGION ADMINISTRATORS, SUPERVISORS, AND CASEWORKERS**

#### **Strengths**

The Vernal office works well together. For example, workers will accompany each other on visits if a worker is uncomfortable going alone. The office works as a really good team.

Guardians ad litem (GAL) go visit kids with the workers, and the GAL's have input about the kids when they go to court because they've met the kids and seen their homes. The GAL's are almost always at team meetings.

The AG in the Basin is readily available to staff cases with the workers anytime.

There was an office staffing held in the Basin with the Region Director. Workers appreciated that he listened to their concerns and is trying to help them. They especially appreciated him giving up his personal vehicle to them.

The Basin has begun hiring new employees before a position is actually vacant. This means someone is ready immediately to take over a caseload when a worker chooses to leave DCFS.

The region Practice Improvement Coordinator has worked tirelessly on getting region staff focused on Practice Model.

The region has focused on locating and engaging fathers.

The region is working on formulating a good mentoring program for new supervisors. The Practice Improvement Team mentors supervisors. The trainers also act as mentors.

The new GAL in Price is attending team meetings, supporting workers, and visiting kids. He's doing a good job and DCFS likes him. He has good ideas.

The AAG in the Basin is awesome. His workload has been huge, yet he's done a great job.

Teaming has increased in every DCFS office, and hopefully the right things are happening in those meetings.

The Region Director recognizes when problems arise and he makes changes. He's been willing and able to make some tough decision, some of which have been unpopular.

The DCFS Director has been down to the region a lot lately and the State Office has been very supportive.

For the most part, supervisors like Centralized Intake. They don't agree with a lot of what they accept or don't accept, but they like not having to handle the referrals themselves.

A new kinship team started almost two years ago. This increased the number of kinship placements, which is now at 60%. This has been especially good to see because the region doesn't have enough foster homes. They don't have complaints from kinship families like they used to because kinship families are assigned a worker to support them.

QCR is a valuable process, especially in light of some of the challenges the region is having.

The region trainers think they're going to love the new training developed by the state training team. They're excited to see how it works.

### **Improvement Opportunities**

There is a lack of all levels of foster homes in the Basin. This means workers must travel hundreds of miles each month to visit kids who are placed out of the local area.

New workers struggle to find someone to mentor them.

The Vernal office needs additional office space. They only have one conference room and one visit room to accommodate all of the team meetings and supervised visits.

The Vernal detention center is no longer used as a shelter, which means kids have to be transported to Richfield.

Worker turnover in the Basin has been especially high. The most experienced staff has only been there about 15 months. There were six resignations in the past three weeks alone. Turnover in Vernal has been 100%. Turnover in Blanding has been 30%. Because of turnover, there's a constant grind of training workers.

The region had been feeling good about holding down the number of kids in foster care, but that number has shot up in the last two or three months. Large sibling groups are being removed because of substance abuse by their parents.

Court relationships haven't improved. They have a difficult time with some AAG's and a couple of judges that are extremely outspoken and hard on the workers. Judges are always mentioned in worker exit interviews as a reason the worker is leaving DCFS employment.

DCFS feels that judges order many kids into their care that should be in JJS custody. The judge may keep them in care until they age out of the system.

More people are figuring out that DCFS is a back door way to get a DSPD waiver for a child. Parents could keep kids in their homes if they could access DSPD services.

The drug testing hours are too limited. They are only open until noon.

### **III. Child and Family Status, System Performance, Analysis, and Trends**

The QCR findings are presented in graphic form to help quantify the observations of the qualitative review. Graphs show a comparison of scores for past years' reviews with the current review. The graphs of the two broad domains of Child and Family Status and System Performance show the percent of cases in which the key indicators were judged to be "acceptable." A six-point rating scale is used to determine whether or not an indicator is judged to be acceptable. Reviewers scored each of the cases reviewed using this rating scale. The range of ratings is as follows:












- 1: Completely Unacceptable
- 2: Substantially Unacceptable
- 3: Partially Unacceptable
- 4: Minimally Acceptable
- 5: Substantially Acceptable
- 6: Optimal Status/Performance

Child and Family Status and System Performance are evaluated using 15 key indicators. Graphs presenting the overall scores for each domain are presented below. They are followed by graphs showing the distribution of scores for each indicator within each of the two domains.



## Child and Family Status Indicators

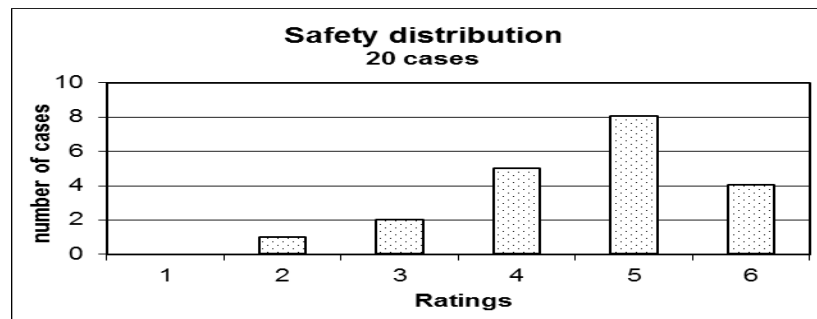
### Overall Status

Eastern Child Status	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators (Exception is Safety = 85%)	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13 Current Scores	Trends
			Standard: Criteria 85% on overall score						
<b>Safety</b>	17	3	 85%	100%	88%	88%	95%	85%	Decreased but above standard
<i>Child Safe from Others</i>	18	2	 90%	na	na	88%	100%	90%	Decreased but above standard
<i>Child Risk to Self or Others</i>	18	2	 90%	na	na	96%	95%	90%	Decreased but above standard
<b>Stability</b>	14	6	 70%	79%	75%	75%	80%	70%	Decreased but above standard
<b>Prospect for Permanence</b>	12	8	 60%	88%	63%	75%	60%	60%	Status Quo and below standard
<b>Health/Physical Well-being</b>	19	1	 95%	100%	96%	100%	95%	95%	Status Quo and above standard
<b>Emot./Behavioral Well-being</b>	17	3	 85%	100%	83%	79%	70%	85%	Improved and above standard
<b>Learning</b>	18	2	 90%	92%	92%	83%	85%	90%	Improved and above standard
<b>Family Connections</b>	11	1	 92%	na	na	na	73%	92%	Improved and above standard
<b>Satisfaction</b>	16	4	 80%	96%	96%	88%	85%	80%	Decreased but above standard
<b>Overall Score</b>	16	4	 80%	100%	88%	88%	80%	80%	Status Quo and below standard

## Safety

**Summative Questions:** Is the child safe from threats of harm in his/her daily living, learning, working and recreational environments? Are others in the child's daily environments safe from the child? Does the child avoid self-endangerment and refrain from using behaviors that may put self and others at risk of harm?

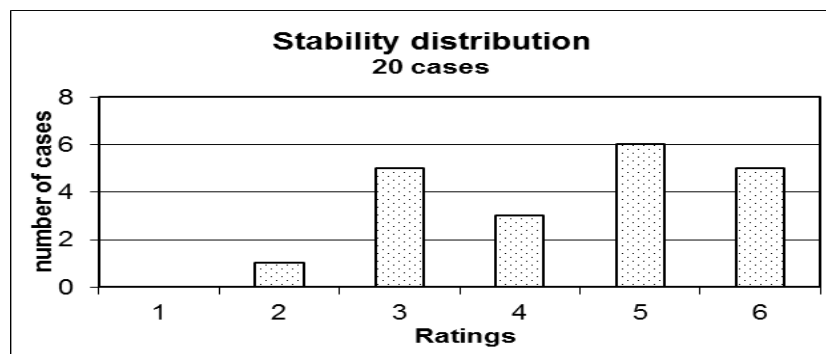
**Findings:** 85% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range. This is a decrease from last year's score of 95%. Out of the 20 cases reviewed, three had an unacceptable score on Safety. One unacceptable score was due to a recent domestic violence episode between the parents that was witnessed by the young target child. In another case the child recently spent unsupervised time with her father who is an alleged perpetrator. In the third case the teenage target child was safe from others, but she recently put herself at risk by using drugs.



## Stability

**Summative Questions:** Has the child's placement setting been consistent and stable? Are the child's daily living and learning arrangements stable and free from risk of disruption? If not, are appropriate services being provided to achieve stability and reduce the probability of disruption?

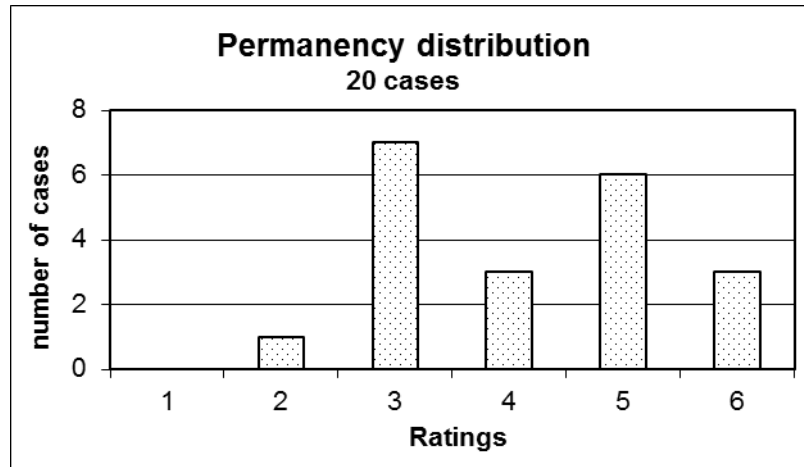
**Findings:** 70% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range. This is a decrease from last year's score of 80% but still reaches the standard.



## Prospects for Permanence

**Summative Questions:** Is the child living with caregivers that the child, caregivers, and other stakeholders believe will endure until the child becomes independent? If not, is a permanency plan presently being implemented on a timely basis that will ensure that the child will live in enduring relationships that provide a sense of family, stability, and belonging?

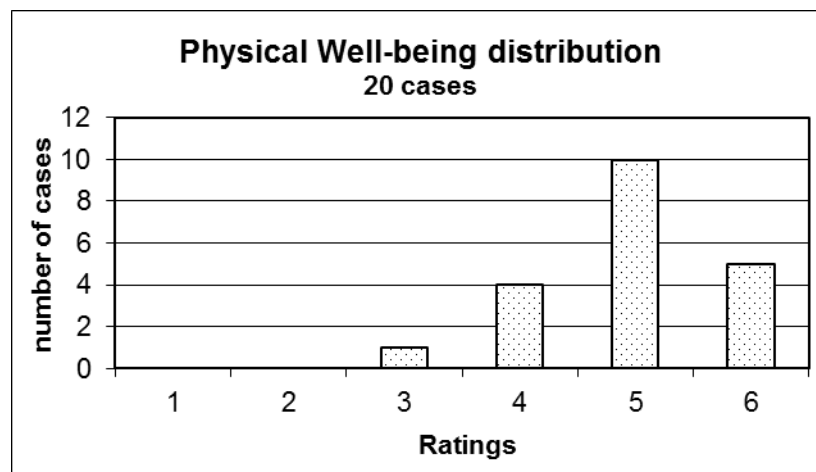
**Findings:** 60% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is identical to last year's score and below standard.



## Health/Physical Well-Being

**Summative Questions:** Is the child in good health? Are the child's basic physical needs being met? Does the child have health care services as needed?

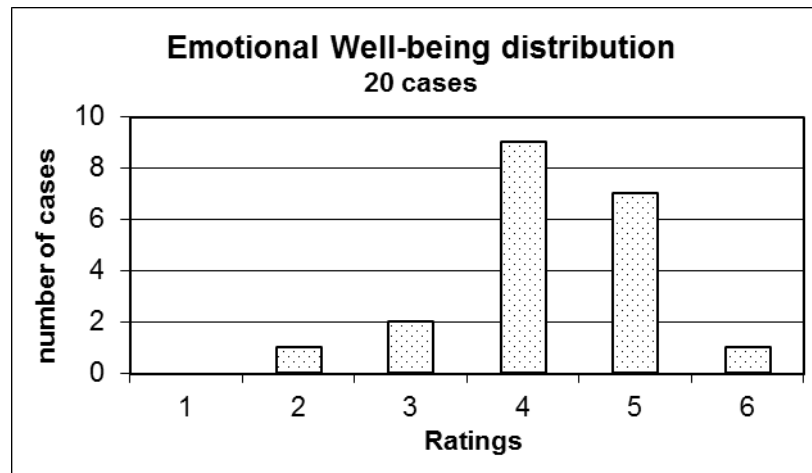
**Findings:** 95% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range. This is identical to last year's score and remains well above standard.



## Emotional/Behavioral Well-Being

**Summative Questions:** Is the child doing well emotionally and behaviorally? If not, is the child making reasonable progress toward stable and adequate functioning, emotionally and behaviorally, at home and school?

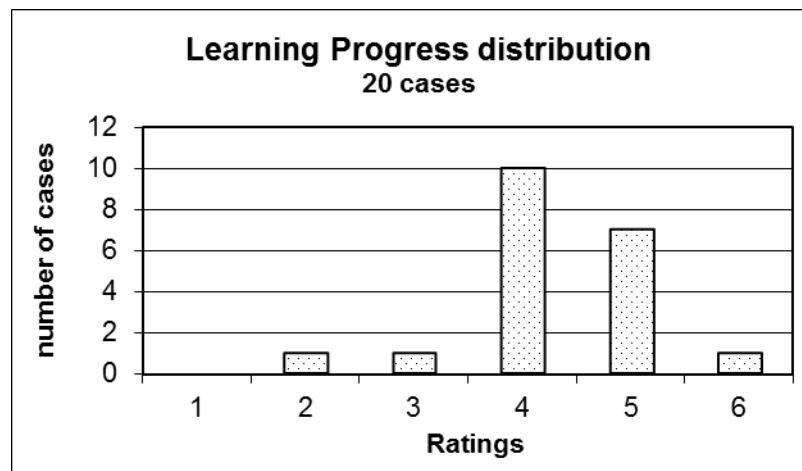
**Findings:** 85% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is a 15 point increase from last year's score of 70% and significantly above the standard.



## Learning Progress

**Summative Question:** Is the child learning, progressing and gaining essential functional capabilities at a rate commensurate with his/her age and ability? Note: There is a supplementary scale used with children under the age of five that puts greater emphasis on developmental progress. Scores from the two scales are combined for this report.

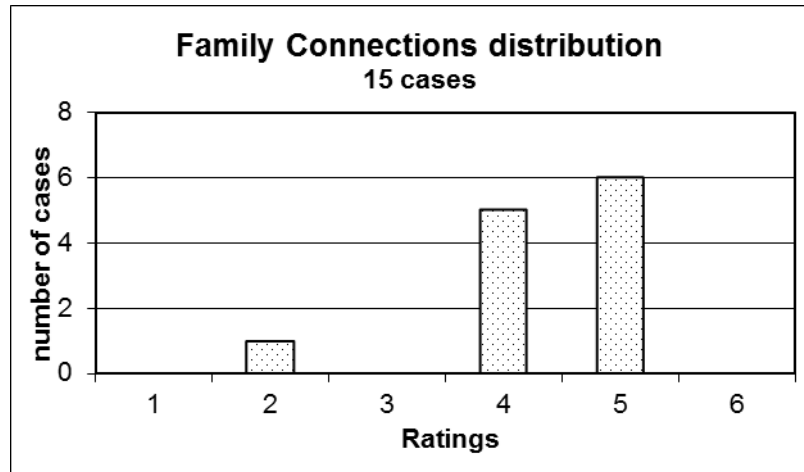
**Findings:** 90% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is slightly better than last year's score of 85% and well above standard.



## Family Connections

**Summative Question:** While the child and family are living apart, are family relationships and connections being maintained through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies, unless compelling reasons exist for keeping them apart?

**Findings:** 92% of cases scored acceptable on Overall Family Connections. This is a remarkable improvement from last year's score of 73%. The score for Siblings was a 80%, and the score for Mothers, Fathers, and Others was 100%!



Eastern Family Connections			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY13 Current Scores
Overall Connections	11	1	92%
Sibling	4	1	80%
Mother	9	0	100%
Father	4	0	100%
Other	1	0	100%

## Satisfaction

**Summative Question:** Are the child, parent/guardian, and substitute caregiver satisfied with the supports and services they are receiving?

**Findings:** 80% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range on the overall Satisfaction score. This is a slight decrease from last year's score of 85%. Reviewers rated the satisfaction of

children, mothers, fathers, and caregivers. Scores for the individual parties ranged from 54% for Mothers to 100% for Caregivers.

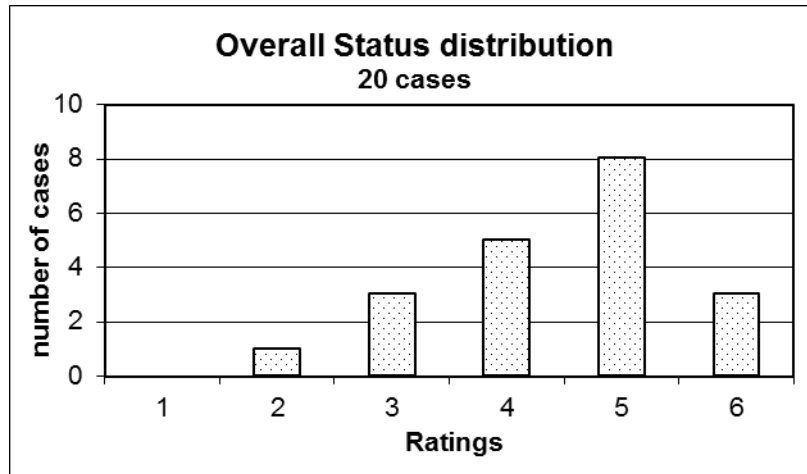


Eastern Satisfaction			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY13 Current Scores
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	16	4	<b>80%</b>
Child	7	4	<b>64%</b>
Mother	7	6	<b>54%</b>
Father	6	2	<b>75%</b>
Caregiver	13	0	<b>100%</b>

## Overall Child and Family Status









**Summative Questions:** Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for the Child and Family Status indicators, how well are this child and family presently doing? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall Child and Family Status using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the first seven status indicators (minus Satisfaction) must score acceptable in order for the Overall Score to be acceptable. A unique condition affects the rating of Overall Child and Family status in every case: The Safety indicator always acts as a “trump” so that the Overall Child and Family status rating cannot be acceptable unless the Safety indicator is also acceptable.

**Findings:** 80% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is identical to last year’s score and below standard for a second consecutive year.



## System Performance Indicators

### Overall System

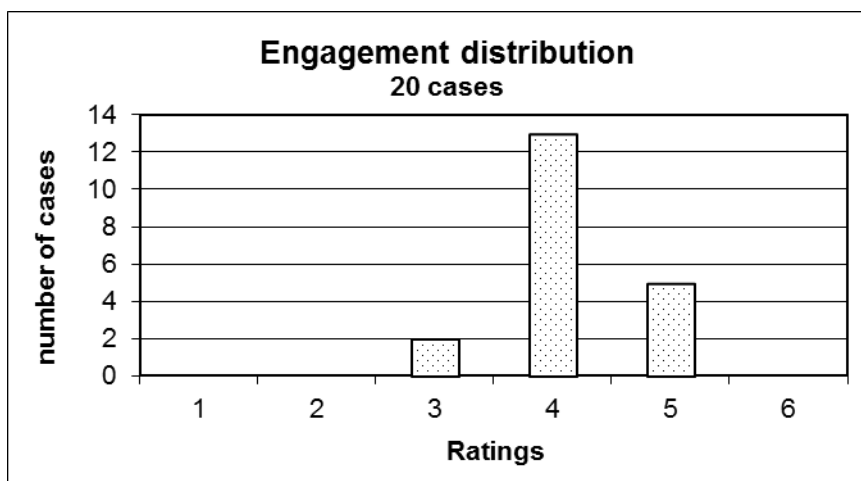
Eastern System Performance	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13 Current Scores	
			Standard: 85% on overall score						
									Trends
Engagement	18	2	 90%	96%	79%	79%	85%	90%	Improved and above standard
Teaming	16	4	 80%	79%	58%	63%	75%	80%	Improved and above standard
Assessment	12	8	 60%	75%	50%	79%	75%	60%	Decreased and below standard
Long-term View	13	7	 65%	88%	46%	58%	65%	65%	Status Quo and below standard
Child & Family Plan	16	4	 80%	83%	63%	71%	60%	80%	Improved and above standard
Intervention Adequacy	14	6	 70%	100%	92%	83%	75%	70%	Decreased but above standard
Tracking & Adapting	17	3	 85%	88%	79%	71%	85%	85%	Status Quo and above standard
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	 85%	<b>96%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>85%</b>	Improved and above standard



## Child and Family Engagement

**Summative Questions:** Has the agency made concerted efforts to actively involve parents and children in the service process and in making decisions about the child and family? To what extent has the agency used rapport building strategies, including special accommodations, to engage the family?

**Findings:** 90% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is an increase from last year's score of 85% and well above standard. Separate scores were given for Child, Mother, Father and Others. An overall score was then selected by the reviewer. Scores for the various groups ranged from a high of 90% for the Child to 56% for Fathers.

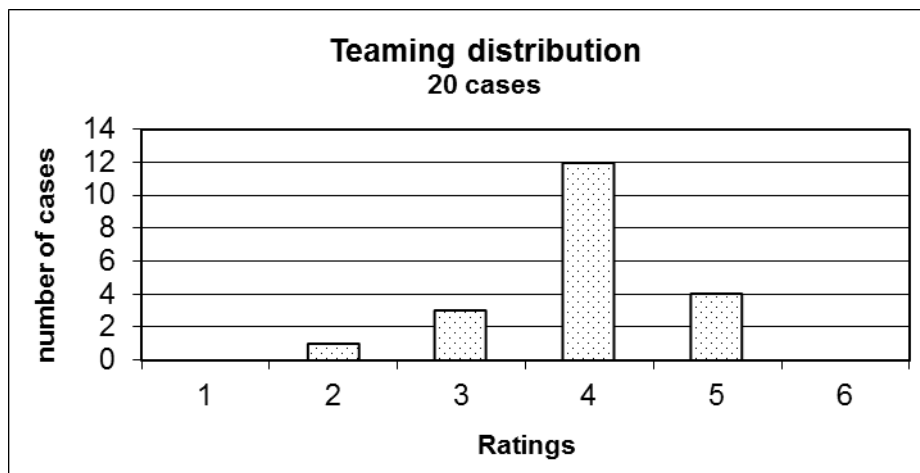


Eastern Engagement				
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY12	FY13 Current Scores
Engagement	18	2	85%	90%
Child	15	2	100%	88%
Mother	11	3	77%	79%
Father	5	4	44%	56%
Other	10	1	88%	91%

## Child and Family Teaming

**Summative Questions:** Do the child, family, and service providers function as a team? Do the actions of the team reflect a pattern of effective teamwork and collaboration that benefits the child and family? Is there effective coordination in the provision of services across all providers?

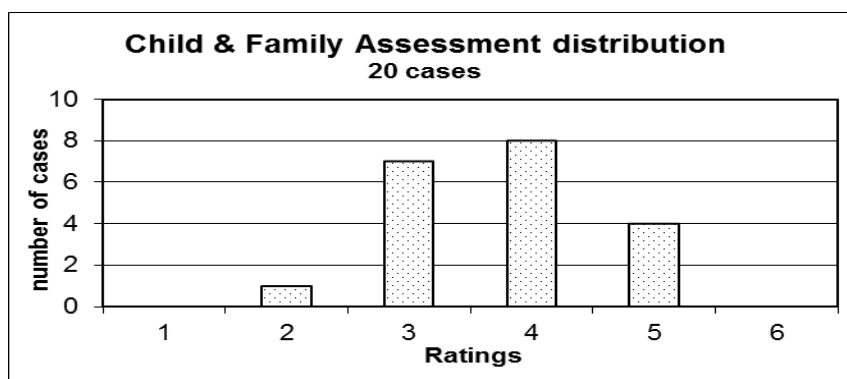
**Findings:** 80% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is an increase from last year's score of 75% and above standard.



## Child and Family Assessment

**Summative Questions:** Are the current, obvious and substantial strengths and needs of the child and family identified through existing assessments, both formal and informal, so that all interveners collectively have a “big picture” understanding of the child and family? Do the assessments help the team draw conclusions on how to provide effective services to meet the child’s needs for enduring permanency, safety, and well-being? Are the critical underlying issues identified that must be resolved for the child to live safely with his/her family independent of agency supervision or to obtain an independent and enduring home?

**Findings:** 60% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range. This is a decrease from last year's score of 75% and below standard. Individual scores were given for this indicator. The highest score was the Caregiver score at 86%. Mothers and Fathers scored significantly lower at 47% and 56% respectively.

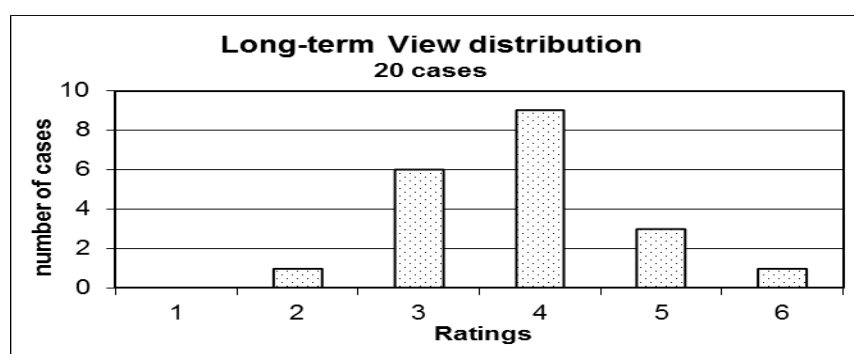


Eastern Assessment			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY13 Current Scores
Overall Assessment	12	8	60%
Child	15	5	75%
Mother	7	8	47%
Father	5	4	56%
Caregiver	12	2	86%

## Long-Term View

**Summative Questions:** Is there a path that will lead the family and/or child toward achieving enduring safety and permanency without DCFS interventions? Is it realistic and achievable? Does the team, particularly the child/family, understand the path and destination? Does the path provide steps and address the next major transition(s) toward achieving enduring safety and permanence independent of DCFS interventions?

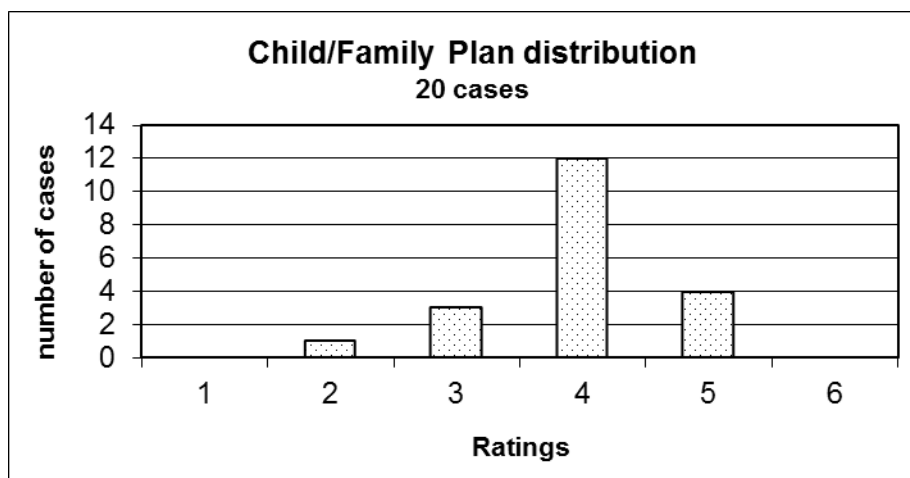
**Findings:** 65% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is identical to last year's score and still a little below standard.



## Child and Family Plan

**Summative Questions:** Is the Child and Family Plan individualized and relevant to needs and goals? Are supports, services and interventions assembled into a holistic and coherent service process that provides a mix of elements uniquely matched to the child/family's situation and preferences? Does the combination of supports and services fit the child and family's situation so as to maximize potential results and minimize conflicting strategies and inconveniences?

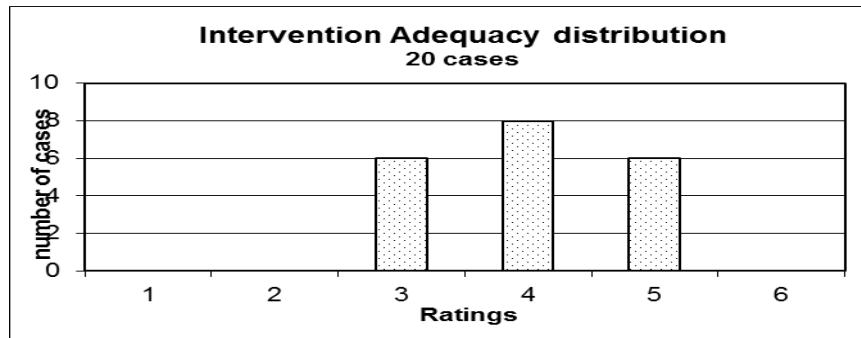
**Findings:** 80% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is a substantial improvement from last year's score of 60%. This score is now back above standard.



## Intervention Adequacy

**Summative Questions:** To what degree are the planned interventions, services, and supports being provided to the child and family of sufficient power (precision, intensity, duration, fidelity, and consistency) and beneficial effect to produce results that would enable the child and family to live safely and independent from DCFS?

**Findings:** 70% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is a decrease from last year's score of 75% and just meets the standard. This indicator was scored separately for Child, Mother, Father, and Caregiver. The scores for Child and Caregiver exceeded the standard at 80% and 93% respectively. The score for Mothers and Fathers were substantially lower at 64% and 29% respectively.

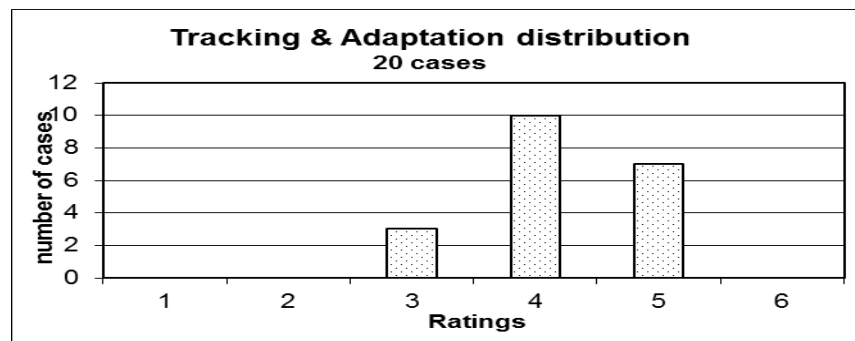


Eastern Intervention Adequacy			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY13 Current Scores
Overall Intervention Adequacy	14	6	70%
Child	16	4	80%
Mother	7	4	64%
Father	2	5	29%
Caregiver	14	1	93%

## Tracking and Adaptation

**Summative Questions:** Are the child and family status, service process, and progress routinely monitored and evaluated by the team? Are services modified to respond to the changing needs of the child and family and to apply knowledge gained about service efforts and results to create a self-correcting service process?

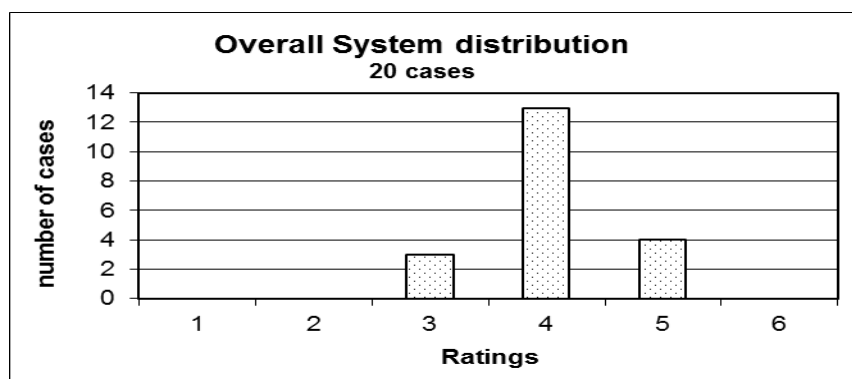
**Findings:** 85% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range. This is identical to last year's score and well above standard.



## Overall System Performance

**Summative Questions:** Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for System Performance indicators, how well is the service system functioning for this child now? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall System Performance using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the seven system performance indicators must score acceptable in order for the overall score to be acceptable.

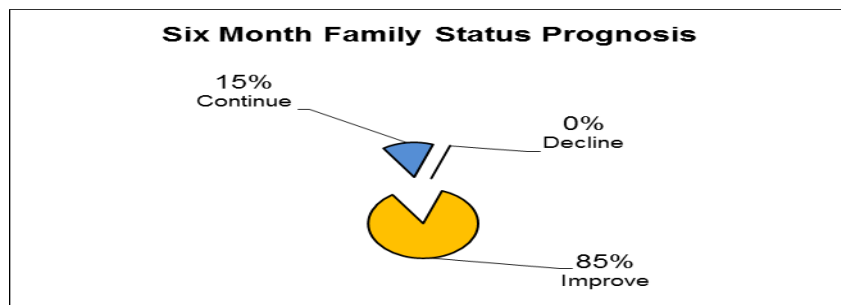
**Findings:** 85% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range. This is a 10 point improvement over last year's score. The Overall System Performance score achieved the 85% standard.



## Status Forecast

One additional measure of case status is the reviewers' prognosis of the child and family's likely status in the next six months, given the current level of system performance. Reviewers respond to this question: "Based on current DCFS involvement for this child, family, and caregiver, is the child's overall status likely to improve, stay about the same, or decline over the next six months?"

Of the 20 cases reviewed, 85% (17 cases) anticipated an improvement in family status over the next six months. In 15% (3 cases), family status was likely to stay about the same. There were no cases where the family's status was expected to decline over the next six months.



## Outcome Matrix

The display below presents a matrix analysis of the service testing results during the current QCR. Each of the cells in the matrix shows the percent of children and families experiencing one of four possible outcomes:

- Outcome 1: child and family status acceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 2: child and family status unacceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 3: child and family status acceptable, system performance unacceptable
- Outcome 4: child and family status unacceptable, system performance unacceptable

The desired result is to have as many children and families in Outcome 1 as possible and as few in Outcome 4 as possible. It is fortunate that some children and families do well in spite of unacceptable system performance (Outcome 3). Experience suggests that these are most often either unusually resilient or resourceful children and families, or children and families who have some “champion” or advocate who protects them from the shortcomings of the system. Unfortunately, there may also be some children and families who, in spite of good system performance, do not do well. (These children and families would fall in Outcome 2).

The outcome matrix for children and families reviewed during the Eastern Region review indicates that 70% of the cases had acceptable ratings on both Child Status and System Performance. There was one case that rated unacceptable on both Child Status and System Performance.

	Favorable Status of Child	Unfavorable Status of Child	
<b>Acceptable System Performance</b>	<b>Outcome 1</b> Good status for the child, agency services presently acceptable.  n= 14 70%	<b>Outcome 2</b> Poor status for the child, agency services minimally acceptable but limited in reach or efficacy.  n= 3 15%	<b>85%</b>
<b>Unacceptable System Performance</b>	<b>Outcome 3</b> Good status for the child, agency Mixed or presently unacceptable.  n= 2 10%	<b>Outcome 4</b> Poor status for the child, agency presently unacceptable.  n= 1 5%	<b>15%</b>
	<b>80%</b>	<b>20%</b>	

## V. Analysis of the Data

### RESULTS BY CASE TYPE

The following tables compare how the different case types performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. There were no family preservation or voluntary cases in the sample. The court ordered In-Home services cases (PSS) scored 80% on Overall System Performance but only 60% on Overall Child Status. These were identical to last year's scores for In-home cases. Both of the In-home cases that performed poorly were thought to be doing well until just prior to the review when one mother suddenly wanted to give custody to the father (an alleged sexual perpetrator) and the other had a domestic violence incident. These two cases also account for the dramatic difference in the Safety scores for Foster Care cases and In-home cases.

Foster Care cases scored better than In-home cases on both Overall Child Status and Overall System Performance. Assessment and Long-term View scored below standard on both foster cases and in-home cases. Intervention adequacy was exceptionally low on In-home cases (40%).

Case Type	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Foster Care SCF	15	93%	60%	87%	87%	80%	67%	67%	73%	80%	80%	87%
In-Home PSS	5	60%	60%	60%	100%	80%	40%	60%	100%	40%	100%	80%

Collection of demographic information regarding cases included in the case sample includes the question, "Did the child come into services due to delinquency rather than abuse and neglect?" Last year seven of the 20 cases (35%) in the sample were reported to have entered services due to delinquency rather than abuse or neglect. This year that number dropped to three (15%). The following table shows that delinquency cases did not score quite as well as non-delinquency cases on Stability or Prospects for Permanency; however, they scored better on Overall System Performance.

Case Type	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performance
Delinquency	3	67%	33%	67%	100%
Non-Delinquency	17	71%	65%	82%	82%

### RESULTS BY PERMANENCY GOAL

The following table compares how the different Permanency Goals performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. There were five different Permanency Goal types represented in the case sample. The unusually low scores on Assessment and Long-term View for Reunification and Remain Homes cases are concerning, as is the unusually low score on



Teaming in Adoption cases and Intervention Adequacy on Remain Home cases. In both of the Adoption cases with unacceptable scores, meetings were held infrequently and many key members were missing. The unacceptable scores on Intervention Adequacy in Remain Home cases are due to lack of intensity in the services to parents; for example, an anger management class in lieu of domestic violence treatment and online parenting classes in lieu of hands on parenting classes that would demonstrably improve the parents' ability to parent.

Permanency Goal	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Adoption	4	100%	75%	75%	75%	50%	75%	75%	50%	75%	75%	75%
Guardianship (Non-Rel)	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Individualized Perm.	3	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	67%	100%	67%	100%
Remain Home	5	60%	60%	60%	100%	80%	40%	60%	100%	40%	100%	80%
Reunification	7	86%	43%	86%	86%	86%	43%	57%	86%	71%	86%	86%

## RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

### Caseload

The following table compares how caseload affected some key child status and core system performance indicators. Caseloads in the sample were divided into two categories: caseloads of 16 cases or less and caseloads of 17 cases or more. Overall System Performance was dramatically better when caseloads were lower. Overall Child Status was similar regardless of the caseload. Last year 80% of the caseworkers had caseloads of 16 cases or less. This year only 65% of the workers had lower caseloads.

Caseload Size	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
16 cases or less	13	85%	46%	77%	85%	92%	69%	69%	85%	77%	92%	100%
17 cases or more	5	80%	80%	80%	100%	40%	20%	40%	60%	40%	60%	40%

### Worker Experience

The following table compares how Length of Employment as a caseworker impacts performance. Notably, 14 of the 20 workers (70%) have less than three years of experience, and half have less than two years experience. There was not a consistent correlation between the workers' experience and overall status or performance scores.

Length of Employment in Current Position	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Less than 12 months	5	80%	40%	60%	100%	80%	80%	40%	100%	80%	100%	80%
12 to 24 months	5	100%	60%	100%	80%	80%	20%	40%	80%	60%	80%	80%
24 to 36 months	4	100%	100%	100%	75%	50%	75%	100%	25%	75%	50%	75%
36 to 48 months	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
48 to 60 months	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
60 to 72 months	3	67%	67%	67%	100%	100%	67%	67%	100%	67%	100%	100%
More than 72 months	3	67%	33%	67%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%

## RESULTS BY OFFICE

The following table compares how offices within the region performed on some key Child Status and System Performance indicators. Cases from seven offices in the Eastern Region were selected as part of the sample. Three of the seven offices scored 100% on both Overall Child Status and Overall System Performance (Blanding, Ute Family, and Moab). The Vernal office has had a significant amount of turnover, which most likely impacted their overall System Performance Score.

Office	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Blanding	2	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	50%	100%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Castle Dale	1	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%
Ute Family	1	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Moab	2	100%	50%	100%	50%	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Price	5	100%	60%	80%	100%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Roosevelt	4	75%	50%	75%	100%	100%	50%	75%	75%	50%	75%	100%
Vernal	5	80%	80%	80%	80%	40%	40%	40%	60%	60%	80%	60%

## RESULTS BY AGE

OSR looked at the effect of age on Stability, Permanency, Overall Child Status, and Overall System Performance. The scores on Stability and Permanency were highest for the youngest and oldest children. They were lowest for children ages 6-15.

Age	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanen	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performan
5 years or less	4	100%	100%	100%	75%
6-10 years	7	57%	43%	71%	86%
11-15 years	4	50%	50%	75%	100%
16 + years	5	100%	100%	100%	75%

## SYSTEM INDICATORS

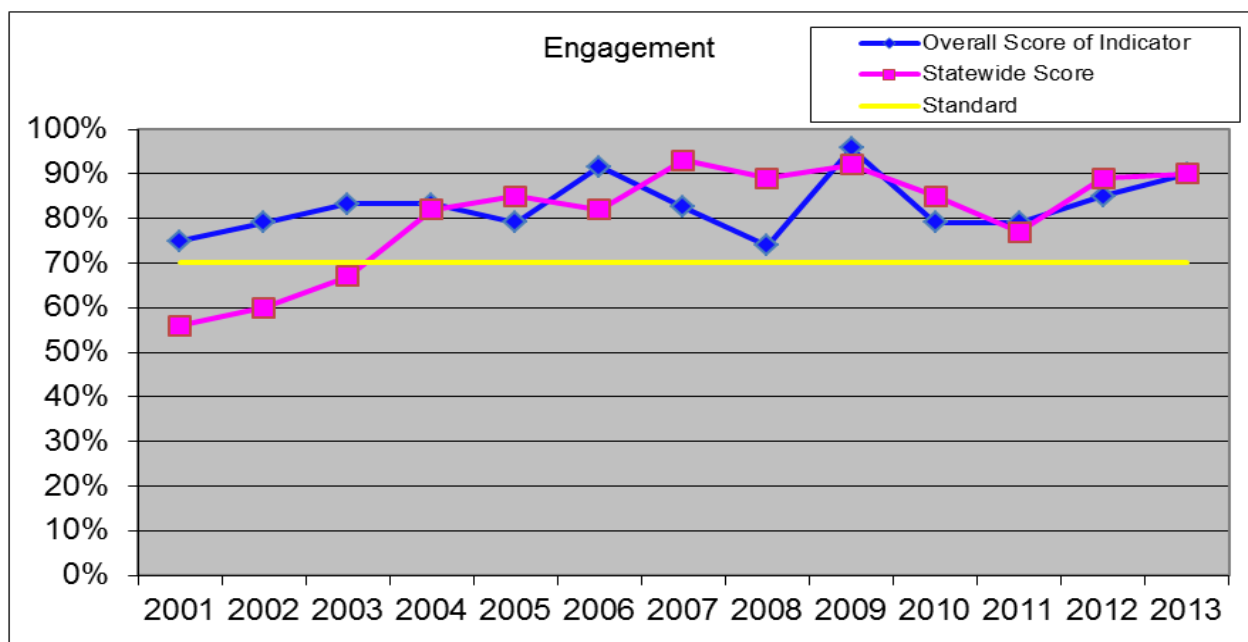
Below is data for all system indicators (Engagement, Teaming, Assessment, Long-term View, Child and Family Plan, Intervention Adequacy, and Tracking and Adaptation) over the last 12 years showing how the ratings of 1 (completely unacceptable), 2 (substantially unacceptable), 3 (partially unacceptable), 4 (minimally acceptable), 5 (substantially acceptable) and 6 (optimal) are trending within each indicator. The table for each indicator in the section below shows an average and percentage score for that indicator. The line graph represents the percentage of the indicator that scored within the acceptable range. The most ideal trend would be to see an increase in the average score of the indicator along with an increase in the percentage score.

Eastern region's score on Overall System Performance improved this year. Scores improved on three of the System Performance indicators (Engagement, Teaming, and Child and Family Plan). Two other System Performance indicators remained the same (Long-term View and Tracking and Adapting) and the other two declined (Assessment and Intervention Adequacy). Two System Performance indicators scored below standard (Assessment and Long-term View).

### Child and Family Engagement

Although the percentage scores on Engagement increased this year, the average score declined. Eastern region's score on this indicator has mirrored the state score for the past several years.

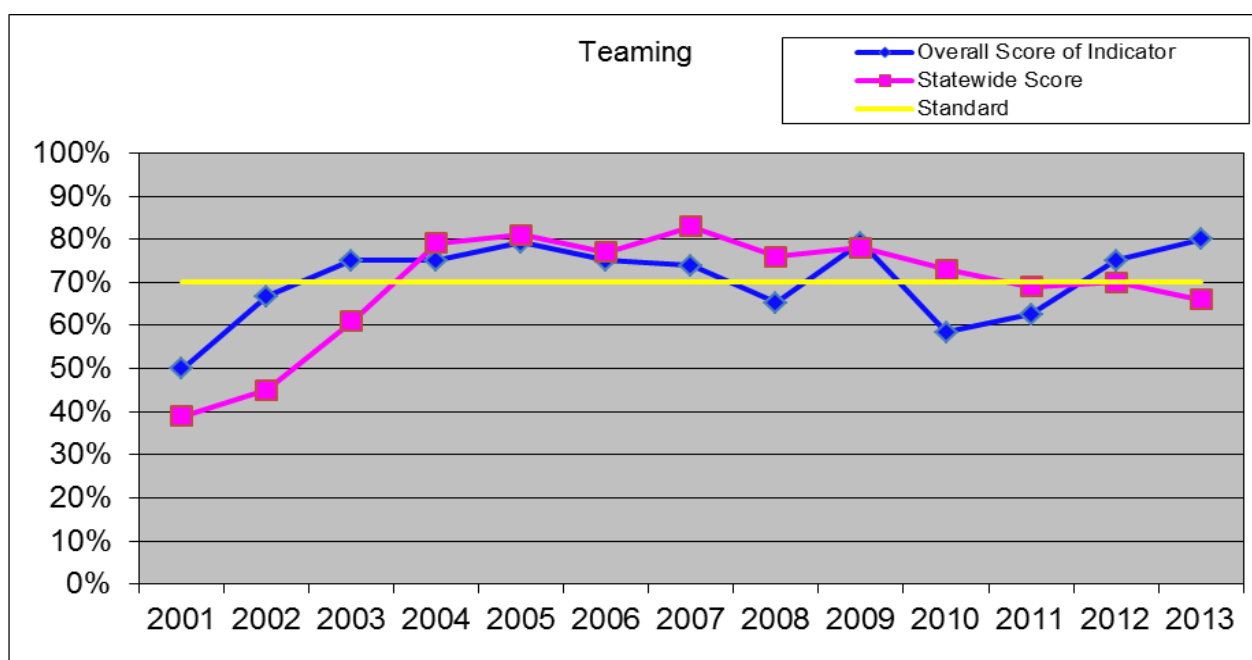
Engagement													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	4.04	4.00	4.29	4.33	4.58	4.42	4.48	4.09	4.67	4.21	4.21	4.40	4.15
Overall Score of Indicator	75%	79%	83%	83%	79%	92%	83%	74%	96%	79%	79%	85%	90%
Statewide Score	56%	60%	67%	82%	85%	82%	93%	89%	92%	85%	77%	89%	90%



## Child and Family Team and Coordination

The Teaming score rose from 75% to 80%, but the average score fell a little. The region had been lagging the state score, but has exceeded the state score for the past two years. Eastern region moved from below standard two years ago to above standard last year, and then moved even farther above standard this year.

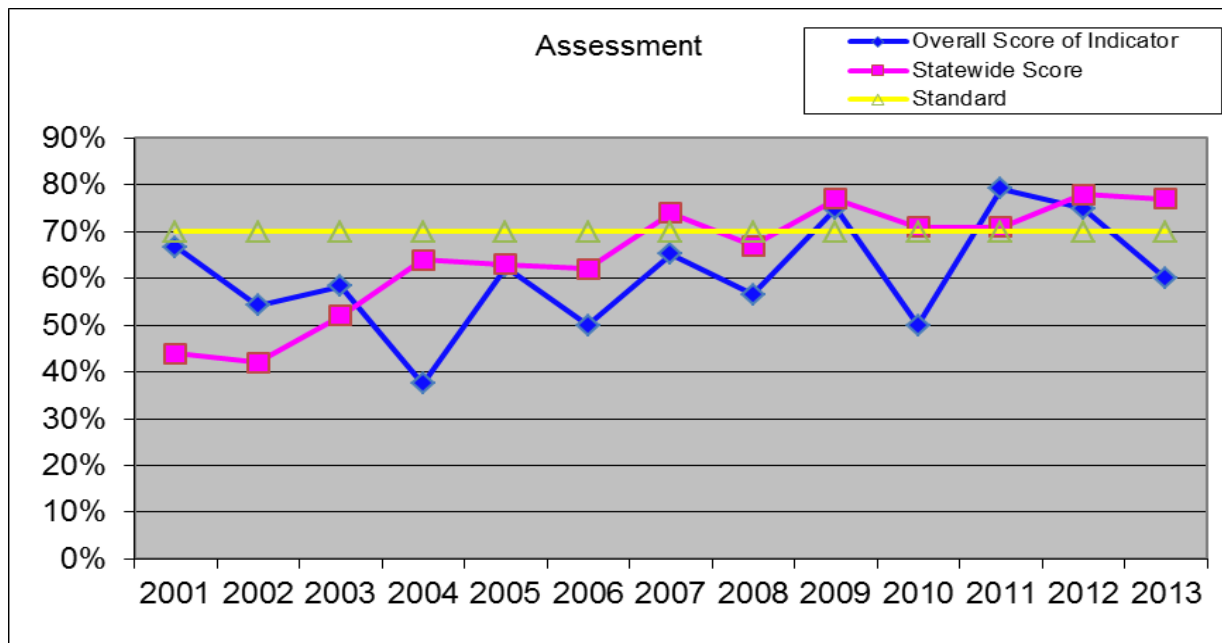
Teaming													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	3.75	3.83	4.08	4.08	4.21	4.04	4.22	3.91	4.42	3.75	3.92	4.05	3.95
Overall Score of Indicator	50%	67%	75%	75%	79%	75%	74%	65%	79%	58%	63%	75%	80%
Statewide Score	39%	45%	61%	79%	81%	77%	83%	76%	78%	73%	69%	70%	66%



## Child and Family Assessment

Both the average and percentage scores declined significantly this year. Eastern region also scored significantly below the state score and well below standard.

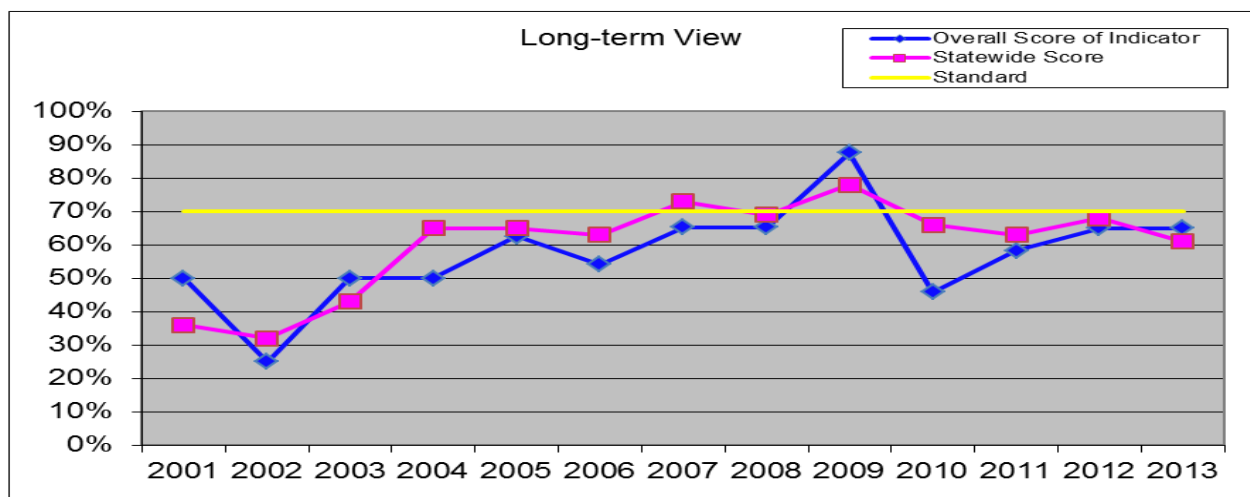
Assessment													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	3.75	3.58	3.92	3.50	3.75	3.63	3.91	3.74	4.13	3.54	4.04	4.00	3.75
Overall Score of Indicator	67%	54%	58%	38%	63%	50%	65%	57%	75%	50%	79%	75%	60%
Statewide Score	44%	42%	52%	64%	63%	62%	74%	67%	77%	71%	71%	78%	77%



### Long-Term View

Both the average and percentage scores were identical to last year's score and a little below standard. However, they exceeded the state score.

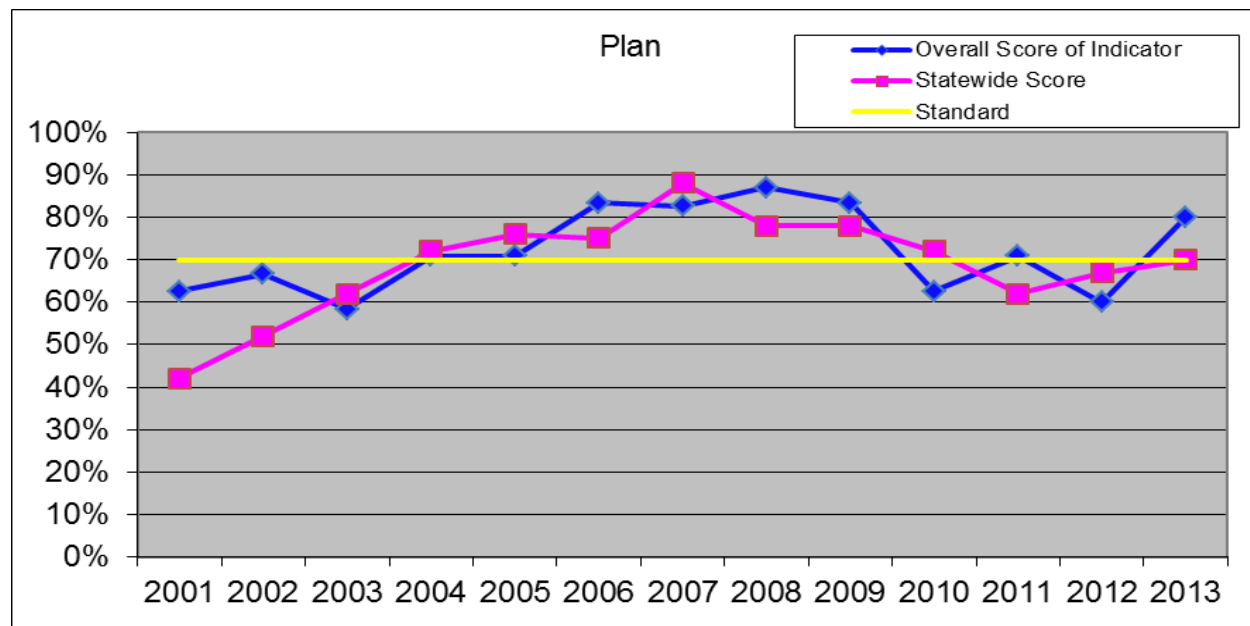
Long-Term View													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	3.38	2.92	3.50	3.54	3.67	3.63	3.78	3.65	4.17	3.54	3.71	3.85	3.85
Overall Score of Indicator	50%	25%	50%	50%	63%	54%	65%	65%	88%	46%	58%	65%	65%
Statewide Score	36%	32%	43%	65%	65%	63%	73%	69%	78%	66%	63%	68%	61%



## Child and Family Plan

Eastern region improved both their percentage score and their average score on Plan. They also significantly exceeded the state score and scored well above standard.

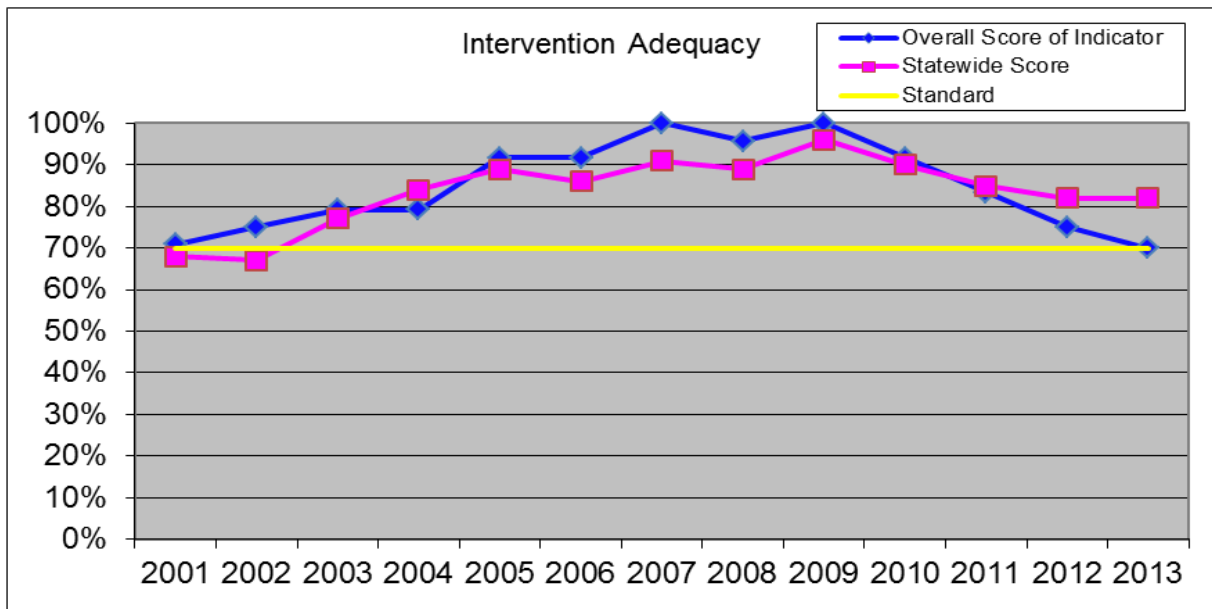
Child and Family Plan													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	3.92	3.63	3.79	3.83	3.88	4.17	4.22	4.13	4.33	3.71	3.96	3.80	3.95
Overall Score of Indicator	63%	67%	58%	71%	71%	83%	83%	87%	83%	63%	71%	60%	80%
Statewide Score	42%	52%	62%	72%	76%	75%	88%	78%	78%	72%	62%	67%	70%



## Intervention Adequacy

Both the average and the percentage score on Intervention Adequacy fell a little, but the percentage remained above standard. The region's score was significantly below the state score. The region has been on a downward trend on this indicator since 2009 when the score was 100%.

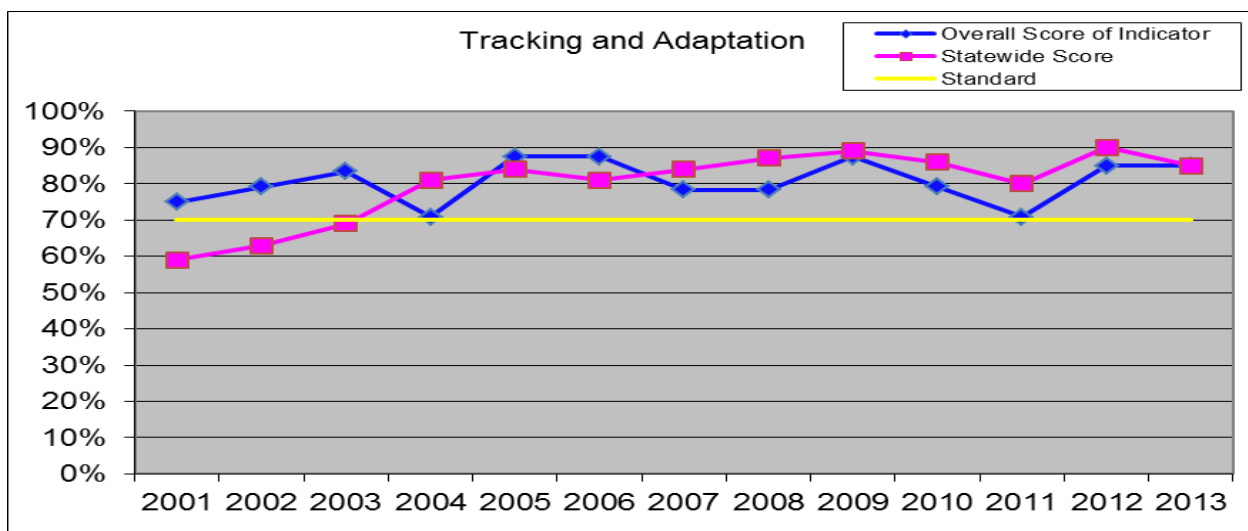
Intervention Adequacy													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	4.00	3.92	4.13	4.17	4.42	4.42	4.74	4.35	4.75	4.21	4.17	4.20	4.00
Overall Score of Indicator	71%	75%	79%	79%	92%	92%	100%	96%	100%	92%	83%	75%	70%
Statewide Score	68%	67%	77%	84%	89%	86%	91%	89%	96%	90%	85%	82%	82%



## Tracking and Adaptation

Although the percentage score remained the same, the region's average score fell somewhat. The percentage score matched the state score and was well above standard.

Tracking and Adaptation													
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Average Score of Indicator	4.13	4.21	4.25	4.08	4.42	4.33	4.52	4.26	4.71	4.17	4.17	4.40	4.20
Overall Score of Indicator	75%	79%	83%	71%	88%	88%	78%	78%	88%	79%	71%	85%	85%
Statewide Score	59%	63%	69%	81%	84%	81%	84%	87%	89%	86%	80%	90%	85%



## **V. Summary and Improvement Opportunities**

### **Summary**

During the FY2013 Eastern Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR), numerous strengths were identified about child welfare practice in the Eastern Region. It is clear that there is significant commitment and hard work devoted to ensuring the safety and well-being of children and families. During the QCR review, a few opportunities for practice improvement were also identified that could improve and enhance the services being provided.

### **Child Status**

Eastern Region fell just below standard on Overall Child Status with a score of 80%, meaning four of 20 cases had an unacceptable overall outcome. Three of these cases had unacceptable score on Safety and the fourth had a majority of unacceptable scores on the Child Status indicators.

Eastern Region achieved scores in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on Health/Physical Well-being, Learning, and Family Connections. Indicators that scored in the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile included Safety, Emotional/Behavioral Well-being, and Satisfaction. Three indicators improved (Emotional/Behavioral Well-being, Learning, and Family Connections) while another three declined (Safety, Stability, and Satisfaction). The only Child Status score that fell below standard was Prospects for Permanency (60%).

### **System Performance**

Eastern Region scored below standard for the past three years; however, they achieved the standard this year (85%). Five of the seven System Performance indicators were above standard, but Assessment and Long-term View fell below standard (60% and 65% respectively). Eastern Region had a very good score on Engagement (90%) and significantly exceeded the state score on Teaming (80% versus 66%).

## **Improvement Opportunities**

### **Child Status**

Three cases had unacceptable scores on Safety and another had unacceptable scores on a majority of the indicators. Two of the children had been involved in recent incidents where their parents had put them at risk either by allowing an alleged perpetrator to have access to them or exposing them to domestic violence. In another case the teen had recently put herself at risk through her drug usage. Permanency was the only Child Status indicator that fell below standard. There were eight cases that received unacceptable scores. In three of the cases the target child's behavior was a barrier to permanency. In the five other cases a permanent placement option hadn't been identified in either a primary or concurrent plan.



## **System Performance**

Commendations to the region for the substantial improvement in their Plan score from 60% last year to 80% this year. They successfully implemented last year's Practice Improvement Plan and were rewarded with performance this year that was well above standard.

## **Assessment**

There were eight cases with unacceptable scores on Assessment. Seven of these eight cases had permanency goals of Remain Home or Reunification, which means fathers and mothers were crucial to accomplishing case goals. Yet on these cases only one of seven mothers and one of four fathers were adequately assessed. There was better assessment of children in these cases; three of eight children were adequately assessed. Some of the missing pieces on assessment of the parents were underlying trauma issues, mental health issues, substance abuse history, domestic violence history, and protective capacity.

## **Long-term View**

Seven cases had unacceptable scores on Long-term View. Five of the seven cases also had unacceptable scores on Prospects for Permanency. These included the three previously mentioned cases where the child's behavior was a barrier to permanency. In two of the other cases there were no steps identified to get to case closure. One was an adoption case and the other was an in-home case. In another case ongoing domestic violence issues put the child at risk of removal, but there was no concurrent plan. In the last case it wasn't not clear which direction the case was headed. Mother wanted to petition to have her reunification services reinstated, but the target child didn't want to return home.

## **Possible Next Steps toward Practice Improvement**

1. Identify a concurrent placement for all children in the event that the primary permanent placement option doesn't work out. In the five cases with unacceptable permanency scores, target children were likely to be removed, unlikely to reunify, or unlikely to achieve permanency in their current placement, yet there was no concurrent plan identified for them beyond a statement of a concurrent permanency goal. Focusing the team on concurrent planning and asking the right questions about what will happen if the primary plan is not successful would help the team be prepared in case the target child has to be removed or cannot be reunified.
2. Focus the team on assessing the needs of the parents. Evaluate whether or not services are intensive enough and whether or not the team has gotten to the parents' underlying needs.